

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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R 301115Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9643

INFO AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA POUCH

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

US MISSION USUN 3889

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EO 11652: NA

TAGS: PFOR, EG, US

SUBJECT: GENERAL REACTION IN EGYPT TO US VETO

REF: (A) CAIRO 1086 (B) CAIRO 1174

1. ITEM CARRIED LOCAL MEDIA JANUARY 30 BY OFFICIAL EGYPTIAN NEWS AGENCY STATES FONMIN FAHMY WILL ADDRESS PEOPLES ASSEMBLY IN EARLY FEBRUARY ON EGYPT'S FORTHCOMING POLITICAL DRIVE AND GOE'S EFFORTS CONVENE GENEVA WITH PLO PARTICIPATING ON EQUAL FOOTING WITH OTHER PARTIES. STATEMENT, "WHICH WILL BE DELIVERED IN WAKE OF RECENT US VETO," WILL UNDERLINE POSITIVE ROLE OF FRANCE IN SEEKING JUST SOLUTION TO ME PROBLEM.

2. WE UNDERSTAND FAHMY INTENDS TO MAKE THIS STATEMENT AT NEXT SESSION OF PEOPLES ASSEMBLY NOW SCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY 7. HE WILL ADDRESS FULL ASSEMBLY, NOT SIMPLY FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE.

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3. SO FAR, FAHMY HAS GIVEN ONLY ONE STATEMENT ON VETO,

AND THIS WAS TO SMALL GROUP OF INVITED EGYPTIAN JOURNALISTS. SUMMARY HIS REMARKS WAS CONTAINED REF A, ALTHOUGH GUMHURIYYA SECOND EDITION ONLY OF JANUARY 28 CONTAINED ADDITIONAL REMARK BY FAHMY, IN WHICH HE REPORTEDLY STATED US VETO WILL NOT CHANGE WORLD UNANIMITY ON LEGITIMATE RIGHTS OF PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND TOTAL OUTCOME OF VOTING CONSTITUTES GAIN AND CONTRIBUTION TO PALESTINE CAUSE. IN THE COMING THREE MONTHS, HE REPORTEDLY CONTINUED, "AMERICA WILL FIND HERSELF FORCED TO CHANGE ITS STAND." DEBATE WAS USEFUL AND VETO WAS NOT SURPRISING; IT RESULTED FROM DOMESTIC REASONS. "COMING PERIOD WILL WITNESS DIPLOMATIC MOVES AND CONTACTS ON WIDEST SCALES TO CONTINUE TO EMBODY PALESTINIAN GAINS...WHICH WILL BE BASIS FOR DRIVE TO REACH PERMANENT JUST SOLUTION TO ME PROBLEM." ALL THIS WILL GIVE A PUSH TO GENEVA CONFERENCE AND TO SADAT'S POLICY OF KEEPING UP MOMENTUM SO THAT 1976 WILL BE YEAR OF PALESTINE.

4. THERE IS NO COMMENTARY OR EDITORIAL ON UNSC VOTING JANUARY 30. ONLY MENTION OF SUBJECT IS REPORT THAT FAHMY WILL ADDRESS ASSEMBLY IN FEBRUARY.

5. EGYPTIANS, TO WHOM WE HAVE SPOKEN SINCE UNSC VOTING, ARE EAGER TO DISCUSS WHAT USG, AND GOE CAN DO NEXT TO PRESERVE MOMENTUM OR AT LEAST TO PRESERVE APPEARANCE OF MOMENTUM. US VETO IS GENERALLY DISMISSED, EVEN BY LEFTISTS TO WHOM WE HAVE SPOKEN, AS EXPECTED AND ISSUE AT HAND IS HOW TO MAINTAIN POSITIVE DIPLOMACY IN US ELECTION YEAR. IN THIS CONTEXT, OUR INTERLOCUTORS OFTEN REMARK THAT FONMIN FAHMY KEEPS BRINGING UP NECESSITY FOR CONVOCATION SOON OF MEPC AND THAT SADAT TOLD JOURNALISTS WITH CANADIAN MINEXAFF (CAIRO 487) THAT EGYPT IS WILLING TO GO TO GENEVA WITHOUT PALESTINIANS AND DISCUSS PLO PARTICIPATION IMMEDIATELY AFTER MEPC CONVENES. IT IS INTERESTING THAT EVEN SEASONED OBSERVERS, REFLECTING THEIR DETERMINED OPTIMISM, SEEM TO FORGET THAT FAHMY MADE CLEAR AFTER SADAT'S PRESS CONFERENCE WITH CANADIANS THAT EGYPT INSISTS PLO BE PRESENT AT ALL STAGES OF GENEVA (CAIRO 588). EGYPTIANS ARE ALSO ASKING US ABOUT POSSIBLE VISIT OF PRESIDENT FORD TO ME WHICH, MANY HOPE, MIGHT RESULT IN NEW AMERICAN

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INITIATIVE. THERE IS ALSO KEEN INTEREST IN RABIN VISIT TO US WHICH AHRAM DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT TOLD US HIS COLLEAGUES HOPE WILL RESULT IN SOFTENING OF ISRAELI POSITION ON PALESTINIANS AS PRICE FOR US VETO.

6. IN GENERAL THEN, CONCERN ABOUT US VETO IS NOT ACUTE. WHAT PREOCCUPIES SOPHISTICATED EGYPTIANS IS FEAR THAT NEITHER CAIRO NOR WASHINGTON WILL BE ABLE TO COME UP WITH

SOLID IDEA, OR EVEN PLOY, ON ME ISSUE, WHICH WILL SHOW

USG-GOE DIPLOMACY HAS NOT COME TO DEADEND.

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